Government jobs. However, keeping in view the need for fiscal prudence and austerity, instructions have been issued by the Ministry of Finance requesting all Ministries / Departments etc. not to fill-up vacant posts until a review was done by the cocnerned Administrative Ministry / Department in consultation with the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure). Copy of these instructions have been endorsed to all the State Governments with the request to consider issuing similar instructions.

(d) The information is not centrally maintained.

Officials on Government watch list

2382. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of a news-item titled "172 officials on Government watch list" appeared in the Times of India dated 20th January, 2000;

(b) whether these officers are from almost every sphere of administration;

(c) if so, what exemplary punishment with wide publicity through electronic media is proposed to be given to them; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL AND TRAINING, DEPARTMENT OF PENSION AND PENSIONERS' WELFARE OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHRA RAJE): (a) and (b) Yes Sir.

(c) and (d) The officers whose names are included in this list are those against whom either the proceedings have been completed and punishment imposed or against whom proceedings are in progress or against whom the allegations received are under investigation / inquiry. The imposition of a suitable punishment on delinquent officials is a sufficient deterrent in itself against malpracties.

Merger of Major companies in Petroleum sector

†2383. DR. D. MASTHAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Committee constituted by Government had

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.